

Reading Lithuanian and Belarusian Roman Catholic Birth/Baptismal Records Written in Russian

“How to” Guide, Intermediate Level: Instruction

July 2022

GOAL

This guide will teach you how to extract information from Roman Catholic birth record written in Russian by understanding column headings and identifying key words and phrases.

INTRODUCTION

You may want to consult the following “How to” Guides before continuing:

- [The Russian Alphabet](#)
- [Deciphering the Handwriting and Understanding the Grammar](#)

HOW TO

Translation of Column Headings (Left Side)

1. Surname	2. Entry Number	3. Birth Number		4. Date		5. When, where, who, and by whom baptized
		Male	Female	Birth	Baptism	
Фамилия окрещенного.	№	Щетъ родившихся.		Ч и с л а.		Когда, гдѣ, кто и кѣмъ, одною ли водою, или со всѣми обрядами таинства окрещень?
		Мужескаго пола.	Женскаго пола.	Рожденія.	Крещенія.	
Мамонтовъ	1	1		1864 Декабрь 18	Январь 6	1 8 6 5 Младшаго Космиса имѣющаго нѣмца года Января шестого дня, въ Верхневолжскомъ приходе священника П. К. Костелъ окрестилъ младенца по имени Карла Космиса сына Алевандра Настоятеля. Оного Крестила съ совершениемъ всѣхъ обрядовъ таинства.

The surname of the father is usually written out horizontally in this column. Rotate the page, and scan for your surname on each entry. Keep in mind that surnames were likely Polonized before they were transliterated in Russian.

2. ENTRY NUMBER

The entry number indicates that the child was the xth child born/recorded that year.

3. BIRTH NUMBER

If a number is found in the first *Мужеск. пола.*, this indicates he was a male and was xth male child of the year. If a number is found in the second column entitled, *Женск. пола.*, this indicates she was a female and was the xth female child of the year.

4. DATE

The date of the birth was recorded in column 4a, while the date of baptism was recorded in column 4a. In some cases, the month is only written at the top of the page, or even just once at the beginning of the month. You may need to scan the surrounding entries and/or pages to find the birth or baptism month. The examples below show the months in genitive case, which is most common in these records; however, you may find the months with different grammatical case endings.

Month	Handwritten Example (Russian)	Month	Handwritten Example (Russian)
January января	января	July июля (іюля)	Іюль
February февраля	февраля	August августа	Августа
March марта	Марта	September сентября	Сентября
April апреля	Апреля	October октября	Октября
May мая	Мая	November ноября	Ноября
June июня (іюня)	Іюня	December декабря	Декабря

5. WHEN, WHERE, WHO, AND BY WHOM BAPTIZED

This column contains information about the baptism. Keep in mind that the paragraph found in this column may vary in format, but the below is a general representation of a typical column entry.

¹Тысяча ²восьмью ³шестидесятью ⁴летом
⁵года января ⁶шестого ⁷дня, ⁸в ⁹Верховском
¹⁰приходе ¹¹Р. К. Костелъ ¹²окрещенъ ¹³имя-
¹⁴деныцъ ¹⁵по имени ¹⁶Карла ¹⁷Ксеньевичъ ¹⁸Сис-
¹⁹томя ²⁰Авдеевичъ ²¹Настоятелемъ ²²оного
²³Костела съ совершениемъ ²⁴всехъ ²⁵обрядовъ
²⁶таинства.

Image from: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS93-Z983-M?cat=1506967>

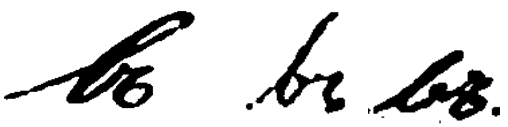
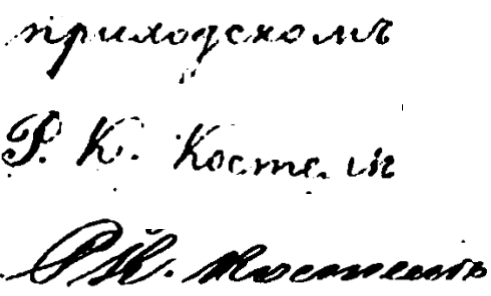
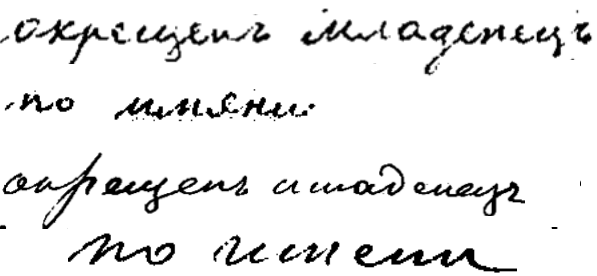
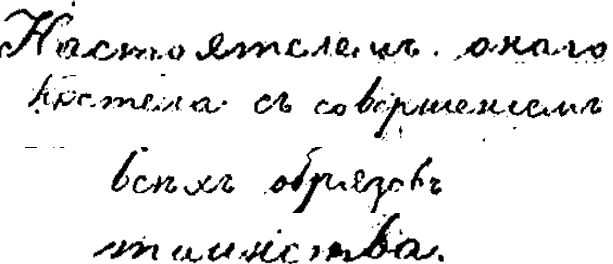
Column 5 Paragraph Outline

One-thousand¹ (year written out) year² (month) (day written out) day,³ in⁴ (name of parish)
 Parish Roman-Catholic Church⁵ baptized the child by the name:⁶ (name of child) (name of priest
 in instrumental case) rector of this church with the performance of all the rites of the sacrament.⁷

Column 5 Key Words

The following key words will indicate the essential genealogical information. The information may come before, after, or between the key words. In some cases, the examples provided may differ in spelling, diacritics, or conjugation of the word. Keep in mind that phrases and even words may be split between two lines. See the additional notes below the table for common variations you might encounter.

English	Russian	Information given	Handwritten Examples
1. One thousand	Тысяча	Followed by the rest of the year, written out.	
2. year	года	Followed by the month of baptism.	
3. day	дня	Preceded by the date of baptism.	

4. in	в(ъ)	Followed by the name of the parish the child was baptized in.	
5. Roman Catholic Parish	приходском(ъ) Р.К. Костелъ*	Preceded by the name of the parish the child was baptized in.	
6. baptized the child by the name	Окрещен(ъ) младенец(ъ)* (male) or по имени	Followed by the name of the child.	
7. rector of this church with the performance of all the rites of the sacrament.	Настоятелем оного костела с совершением всех обрядов таинства	Preceded by the name of the priest in instrumental case.***	

*In some cases, the abbreviated P.K. may be spelled out as *Римско-Католическом(ъ)* (Roman Catholic) as shown in the example below.



**In some cases, if it was a female child, you may see *девица* or *девицаю* as shown in the examples below. You may also encounter *младенца* or *младенцею*.

***The name of the priest directly follows the name of the child. Be sure that you do not confuse the name of the priest as or for part of the name of the child. The name of the priest will be repeated in each column – this will help you know which names belong to the priest and which name(s) belong to the child.

6. The parents, when, where, and in which parish was the baptized child was born	7. The godparents and who attended	8. Optional notes
Какихъ родителей, когда и гдѣ, т. е., въ какомъ приходѣ родился крещен- ный?	Кто были по имени и прозванію во- спріемники при Св. Крещеніи и кто присутствовалъ?	Рукоприкладство свидѣтелей запи- си по желанію.
<i>Тодѣ</i>	<i>Январь.</i>	
<i>крестника Спаса и Петра на уезд. Русакъ вилъ Матуревна заключивъ супружество съ роди- мцемъ 18 Декабря 1864 года въ де- ревнѣ Фабалышкнхъ.</i>	<i>Восприемниками были крес- тница Матосъ Матуревна съ Гаврилою Викентіе Шавел- суринскою.</i>	

Image from: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS93-Z983-M?cat=1506967>

6. THE PARENTS, WHEN, WHERE, AND IN WHICH PARISH THE BAPTIZED CHILD WAS BORN

This column contains information about the parents of the child and birthdate. Keep in mind that the paragraph found in this column may vary in format, but the below is a general representation of a typical column entry. Names of parents appear in genitive case. To learn more about genitive case, please see [Deciphering the Handwriting and Understanding the Grammar](#).

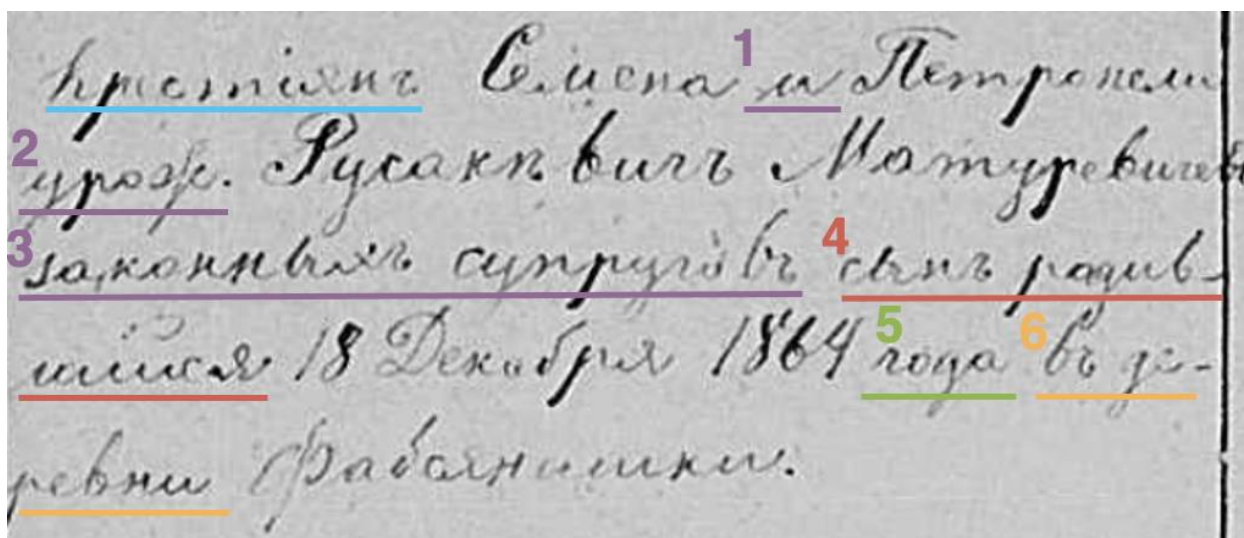


Image from: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS93-Z983-M?cat=1506967>

Column 6 Paragraph Outline

Social Estate (given name of father in genitive case) **and**¹ (given name of mother in genitive case) **born as/née**² (maiden name of mother in genitive case) (surname of the father in genitive case) **lawful spouse**³ **son/daughter born**⁴ (date of birth – may be written out in numerals or words) **year**⁵ **lawful spouse**⁶ in the village of (name of village in genitive case).


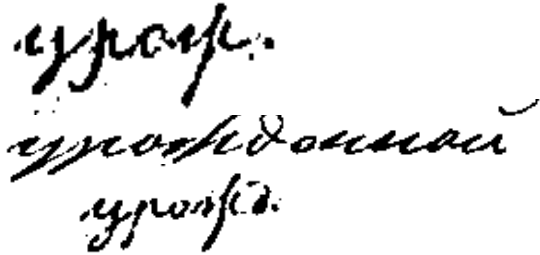
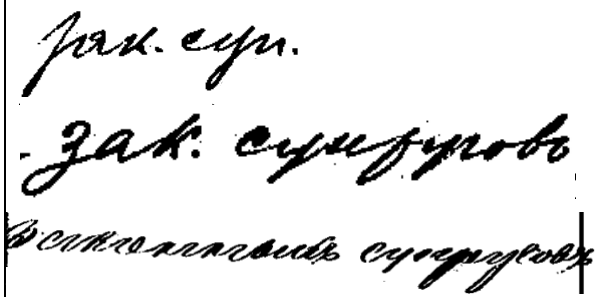
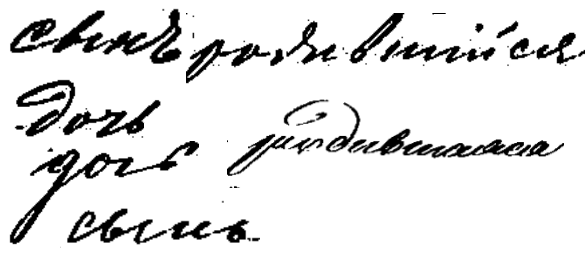

Social Estate

In the Russian Empire, each person had a certain place in society, known as their social estate or *soslovie*. They were often recorded in metrical books. Common examples are found below.

English	Russian	Handwritten Example
Peasant	Крестьян(ъ)	<i>Крестьянъ</i>
Petty bourgeois	Мѣщан(ъ)/ Мѣщанин(ъ)	<i>Мѣщанинъ</i>
Nobility	Дворянъ	<i>Дворянъ</i>

Column 6 Key Words

The following key words will indicate the essential genealogical information. The information may come before, after, or between the key words. In some cases, the examples provided may differ in spelling, diacritics, or conjugation of the word. Keep in mind that phrases and even words may be split between two lines. See the additional notes below the table for common variations you might encounter.

English	Russian	Information given	Handwritten Examples
1. and	и	<i>Preceded by the name of the father in genitive case and followed by the name of the mother in genitive case.</i>	
2. born as/ née	урожденной/ урожд./урожд. *	<i>Followed by the maiden name of the mother in genitive plural case.</i>	
3. lawful spouse	законных(ъ) супругов(ъ)/зак. суп.	<i>Preceded by the father's surname in genitive plural case.</i>	
4. son/ daughter was born	сын(ъ)/ дочь родившийся	<i>Followed by the date of birth (may be written out in words or numerals)</i>	
5. year	года	<i>Preceded by the date of birth (may be written out in words or numerals)</i>	

6. in the village	в(ъ) деревне/ в(ъ) дер./ в(ъ) д.**	Followed by the name of the village the child was born in.	
-------------------	--	--	--

* In some cases, the word *из(ъ)* may be used instead of *урожденной/урож.* as shown in the examples below (the examples use two variations of the same letter з)

There are many different variations for the word village in Russian. If you encounter other words, refer to the **Other Helpful Vocabulary Words section of this “How to” Guide, use the [Russian Genealogical Word List](#) to help you determine the meaning.

7. THE GODPARENTS AND WHO ATTENDED

There are typically two witnesses recorded in this column. They are signaled by the key word “*Восприемниками были*” (may also be spelled “*Воспріемниками были*”). This is followed by the names of the witnesses, separated by *и* (and) or *с(ъ)* (with).

8. OPTIONAL NOTES

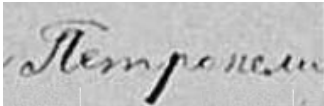
This column is often left blank but is reserved for additional notes or comments.

OTHER HELPFUL VOCABULARY WORDS

village with a church	село
city	город
settlement	посадъ
yesterday	вчерашнего дня
today	сегодняшнего дня
of the same year	текущего (текущего) года
of the same month	сего месяца

PRACTICE

Now that we have learned about the key words, let's practice reading the record above by extracting the important genealogical details.

What is the surname written in the first column?	Maturewicz	
What was the date of birth? (hint – it's recorded in two places)	18 December 1864	 
What was the date of baptism? (hint – it's recorded in two places)	6 January 1865	 
What is the name of the parish the child belonged to/was baptized in?	Verki/Werki (now Verkiai, Lithuania)	
What is the name of the child?	Karl	
What was the father's social estate?	Peasant Крестіянъ)	
What was the name of the father?	Semyon	
What was the name of the mother?	Petronella née Rusakiewicz	 
What village was the child born in?	Fabianiszki (now Fabijoniškės, Lithuania)	

ACTIVITY

Now, test your skills you have learned in this “How to” Guide. The Activity is a way to check your knowledge and let you know you’ve mastered the Guide! Click [here](#) to try out the Activity.